

Studies in Christianity

S#1.

Christian Love #15

Christian Love Is Selfless

S#2.

Text : I Corinthians 13 ; Matthew 26: 36-42

A. In our current series, we've seen some ways that love does and does not act. S#3.

1. **I Cor. 13: 4** – Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous;
love does not brag and is not arrogant,
3. Our primary text for this lesson is I Cor. 13: 5
 - a. **I Cor. 13: 5** – Love... **5** does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own.
is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered,
 - b. It will zero in on the phrase **“it does not seek its own.”**

S#4.

B. We're spending time studying biblical love, agape love, because it is difficult.

1. People are not born with agape ... just the opposite ... we are born self-centered.
 - a. Being born helpless and totally dependent, we instinctively use other people.
 - b. We are expected to outgrow this selfish tendency, but most never do .. completely.
 - c. People form relationships they feel will be to their advantage,
2. People of the world seek to socialize this behavior, but not to eliminate it.
 - a. It is commonly expressed, *“A body's got to look out for number one.”*
 - b. A famous psychologist phrased it like this,
“Our highest calling in life is to take loving care of ourselves.”
 - c. Perhaps Shirley Maclaine expressed the world view best when interviewed by the Washington Post : *“The only sustaining love involvement is with myself. When you look back on your life to try to figure out where you have been and where you are going, when you look at your work, your love affairs, your children, your pain, your happiness, when you look at all that closely you'll find the only person you really go to bed with is yourself. The only thing you have is working to your own identity. That's what I've been trying to do all my life.”*

S#5.

C. The plan for our lesson is to explore :

S#6.

1. The world does not often practice “agape” love.
2. How do I know MY love is “agape” and not selfish.
3. Jesus is the perfect example of selfless love.

I. The world does not often practice agape love?

S#7.

A. There is a kind of love that seeks its own gratification ... Eros.**S#8.**

1. From Eros we get such words as ... erotic and erotica
2. Eros was a Greek god that had the power to cause a person to desire or to be repulsed by another person.
 - a. Another name for Eros is Cupid.
 - b. His golden arrows create lust.

S#9.**B. Satan has advocated self-centered love successfully from the garden 'til now.**

1. He caused Eve to desire what she was forbidden to touch.
2. David had "Eros" for Bathsheba and it destroyed his life.
3. Satan evangelizes this lustful kind of "love" very aggressively.
 - a. TV has become pornographic and is full of commercials designed to create desires.
 - b. Internet phonography has reached epidemic proportions ... both men and women.

C. Today "Eros" is the common view of "love".**S#10.**

1. The most common complain of people getting divorced is :
 - a. He / she doesn't make me happy ... doesn't fill my needs.
 - 1) **TRUTH** ... they got married because of lust and it isn't so hot any more.
 - 2) One or both isn't willing to put in the effort to form a life-partnership.
 - b. I'm in love with someone else ... I am lusting for someone else.
2. This attitude carries over into the practice of one's faith.
 - a. Come to the assembly when it makes them feel good.
 - 1) Music ... songs they like.
 - 2) Lesson that makes them feel good about themselves.
 - 3) Come if everyone hurries to speaks to them before they get out the door.
 - b. They read the Psalms when they need encouraged, but don't study.

S#11.**D. There is another kind of love that is higher than Eros, but still self-centered.**

1. There is a love we have for our family members ... parents, siblings, etc.
2. **Phileo** is by definition "*treat affectionately or kindly, to befriend, to like, to approve of*"
3. It is selfish in that one most often expects "phileo" to be reciprocated.
 - a. One who cares for his family most often expects that his family will care for him.
 - b. When phileo consistently meets a negative response, it is often withdrawn.

4. This kind of family love is both appropriate and commanded,
 - a. **I Tim. 5: 8** – But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially **S#12.**
for those of his household, he has denied the faith and
is worse than an unbeliever. (Cf – **Gal. 6: 10** ... *especially*)
 - b. Even in the presence phileo, there is no substitute for agape.
 - c. If we withhold love, we deny Christ.
Tit. 1: 16 – They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him,
being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.

II. How do I know my love is “agape” and not selfish? **S#13.**

A. The Apostle Paul set an example of unselfish love and urge us to follow. **S#14.**

1. **I Cor. 10: 32** – Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church
of God; **33** just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my
own profit but the profit of the many, so that they may be saved.
11:1 Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.
2. The Apostle commended the preacher Timothy for unselfish love.
Phil. 2: 19 – But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, **S#15.**
so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.
20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be
concerned for your welfare. **21** For they all seek after their own
interests, not those of Christ Jesus. (*Who is the they ? Preachers.*)

B. Questions to ask yourself : **S#16.**

1. Is it part of my thinking to be on the lookout for ways to help others ? **S#17.**
 - a. **Gal. 5: 13** – For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not turn your
freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.
 - b. There are many ways to serve each other ... spiritual needs, emotional, physical.
 - c. **Ill – Lonely people just need to interact with people ... talk about anything.**
2. Do I ever help someone anonymously with no thought of a “Thank you.” **S#18.**
3. Does it give me joy to give others joy ? **S#19.**
 - a. **John 15:11** – These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be
in you, and that your joy may be made full.
 - b. Do I have interaction solely because I enjoy them ? Or, do I seek to give joy ?
4. When I am arguing with another person, am I willing to let them be right ? **S#20.**
 - a. **Rom. 14: 1** – Now accept the one who is weak in faith, but
not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.
 - b. Must I win when I am convince the other person is wrong ? (*He has weird ideas.*)
 - c. This is not matters of established doctrines, but areas of opinion. (*Best team, etc.*)

5. When there are limited resources am I willing to do without ? S#21.
 - a. When there is a potluck, do I want to be at the front to insure I get my favorites.
 - * b. When there is one piece of pie left, am I willing to let someone else get it.

C. The love that God requires seeks to please and to bless others. S#22.

1. The Christians lives with an awareness of the needs and condition of others.
2. **Rom. 12: 14** – Bless those who persecute you: bless and do not curse.
 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.
3. We must be open enough with each other so we can practice this love.

III. Jesus is the perfect example of selfless love. S#23.

A. Jesus gave up unimaginable majesty to come to earth.

1. Jesus existed in a glorious state before He entered Mary. S#24.
 John 17: 4 – I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do. **5** Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.
2. Jesus willingly left Heaven in order to come save YOU and me.
 Phil. 2: 5 – Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, S#25.
 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
3. *Whatever we are called upon to give up to follow Jesus is nothing compared to what He gave up to save us.*

B. In our Matthew 26 text it is made clear that Jesus did NOT want to be crucified.

1. He was grieved at what He was about to face.
 Matt. 26:38 – He ... began to be grieved and distressed. **38** Then He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me." (*Waiting for those who will crucify*) S#26.
2. Being in the flesh and knowing what He would endure, He was greatly fearful.
 Luke 22: 43 – Now an angel from heaven appeared to Him, strengthening Him. **44** And being in agony He was praying very fervently; and His sweat became like drops of blood, falling down upon the ground.

C. Jesus feared the separation from God more than the physical death.

1. The prophets told of the purpose of the coming of the Messiah.
 Isa. 53: 6 – All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his S#27.
 own way; but the Lord has caused the iniquity of us all To fall on Him.

2. Jesus was prepared a body so He the sacrificial Lamb to take away sin. **S#28.**

a. **Heb. 10: 4** – For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. **5** Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You have not desired, but a body You have prepared for Me; ..."

b. **John 1: 29** – The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! **3**

3. It was absolutely necessary for Jesus to die IF our sins were to be forgiven.

Rom. 6: 23 – For the wages of sin is death, (separation from God) **S#29.**
but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4. When Jesus cried out on the cross, it was because He was separated from God.

Mark 15: 34 – At the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, Lama Sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

D. Jesus prayed three time that He might be spared the cross. **S#30.**

1. Vs. **39** – He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." **S#31.**

2. Vs. **42** – He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if (*since*) this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done."

3. Vs. **44** – And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more.

CONCLUSION :

A. When Jesus says that we are to love as He loves, it is to this that He refers. **S#32.**

1. **John 13: 34** – A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

2. To love was not a new command; the new part was to love as Jesus loved.

B. Are you there yet ? Neither am I ? But, we are all striving to be.

1. *"The church is a place of transition where we are becoming what God wants us to be."*

2. We strive for a love that does not seek its own and does not demand a response.

Luke 6: 27 – But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, **28** bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. **S#33.**

S#00.

C. When we seek our own, we indicate that we do not trust God to take care of us.

INVITATION : Place your trust in God and you will be free to love others. **S#00.**

S#1. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**I Corinthians 13**

1 If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. **2** If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. **3** And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.

4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, **5** does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, **6** does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; **7** bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. **9** For we know in part and we prophesy in part; **10** but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away.

Matthew 26: 36-46

36 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." **37** And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be grieved and distressed. **38** Then He said to them, " My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me."

39 And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." **40** And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? **41** " Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

42 He went away again a second time and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." **43** Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. **44** And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. **45** Then He came to the disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. **46** Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"